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"There are many in this old world of ours who hold that things break about even for all of us. I have observed for example that we all get about the same amount of ice. The rich get it in the summertime and the poor get it in the winter."

-- Bat Masterson

Maconochie's Gentlemen-Good Time Matters?

According to the Correctional Education Association, the best correctional education programs offer a full range of programming from the very basic literacy skills of the non-reader, pre-GED, GED, high school diplomas with graduation ceremonies to undergraduate and graduate courses that lead to degrees. In addition to, English as a second language, vocational education leading to certificates, parenting skills, consumer education, survival skills, and employability skills. Moreover, what all the best programs have in common is the offering of incentives for successfully taking part and completing programs. Did you know offering incentives for good behavior and hard work dates back to the 19th century?

In May 1840, Alexander Maconochie, a Scottish administrator with a Navy background, was appointed to run and manage Norfolk Island. Norfolk was, at the time, one of the toughest correctional institutions in the British empire, housing hardened violent criminals who were sent to Penal Australia. Maconochie's correctional ideology was quite revolutionary for the time. Firm in his belief that punishment without reform was a socially empty act, he sought to generate a system under which convicts would earn their own freedom through "marks", which they would earn for good behavior and hard work. The "marks" could be used to purchase luxuries beyond a diet of bread and water, or to purchase one's freedom. The imprisonment experience, beginning with a period of solitude, would gradually loosen as convicts rose from level to level (or tighten back for those who "slipped"), to the point of being a closer simulation of life on the outside.

In his three years on the island, Maconochie had created a culture of learning and improvement within Norfolk. The library was stocked with books and prisoners would congregate, read and debate. Theatrical productions were considered. Musical instruments were ordered. Contrary to the previous practice of anonymous graves, headstones were placed on deceased prisoners' graves. Queen Victoria's birthday was celebrated as an island holiday, during which the prisoners were free to roam about the island. In three years, Maconochie transformed what was one of the most brutal convict settlements in history into a controlled, stable, and productive environment that achieved such success that upon release his prisoners came to be called "Maconochie's Gentlemen".

Maconochie's methods produced prodigious results with regard to recidivism rates. During his tenure at Norfolk, he discharged 920 of the twice-convicted offenders; by 1845, only twenty of them had been convicted again. However, these methods, which were initially endorsed by the Empire, became increasingly controversial. Critics complained that inmates were not receiving enough punishment in the initial statements and were horrified to hear about the island holiday. Under much political pressure, Maconochie was sent back to England in late 1844 and two years later published a book outlining his system. This had an immense influence on the development of penology. John Barry, Maconochie's biographer, states that "Maconochie was a pioneer in penal reform, and suffered the fate of men in advance of their times. His concepts and many of his practical measures are now the basis of Western penal systems."

Today, at least thirty-one states offer credits in one form or other; usually, state legislation authorizes the correctional authorities to define which programs merit earned time. Twenty-one states reward education and 18 states reward work. The amount of time earned (how many days of participation are required for one day of early release) also varies from state to state. Refer to the Winter 2009 Issue of the Education Services Newsletter located on our website, www.doc.nv.gov, for the most current merit credit offerings at our institutions.

Several evaluation studies done on good credit programs found no significant difference in recidivism rates between early released inmates and inmates who served the full term. However, one study found a significantly *lower* recidivism rate for those who were released on good credits.

To read more about Maconochie, read Norval Morris' book [Maconochie's Gentlemen](#).

Speaking of the 19th Century...Carson City Footprints

In the late 1870s, inmates working at the quarry at the Nevada State Prison began uncovering fossils as well as unusual footprints in the stone. In 1881, Warden William Garrard wrote to the California Academy of Sciences in San Francisco to request help in determining the source of the footprints. While his letter went unanswered, a year later, W. J. Hanks, sheriff of Storey County and a former prison employee, met with Charles Drayton Gibbes, the academy's geologist, who agreed to investigate. Gibbes, along with H.W. Harkness and several California University professors, visited the quarry later that year. In a follow up report, Harkness noted that the site was most likely once a pond or lake and that "we see the footprints of a variety of animals, among which we recognize those of the mammoth, the deer, the wolf, of many birds, of a horse, and most important of all, the imprints of the sandaled foot of a man."

The news generated considerable attention as Harkness noted that the human footprints measured 19-inches long, eight inches across, and appeared to indicate a stride of two to three feet—about that of a six-foot man wearing sandals. Other scientists studied the prints and came to different conclusions. Several noted that the prints resembled those of an extinct gigantic ground sloth, which often appeared to walk on two legs because its hind feet fell almost exactly over the prints of its forefeet, which also served to lengthen the size of the print.

In 1919, paleontologist Chester Stock, who had aided in the excavation of the Rancho Le Brea asphalt deposits, finally solved the mystery. After studying the tracks, Stock said the Carson City prints were nearly identical to sloth prints found at Rancho Le Brea. Additionally, he examined fossils uncovered at the quarry and found that they included sloth bone fragments. He said this "removes still further the possibility that the Carson footprints are to be attributed to a member of the Hominidae (human race)."

Ring in the New Year

It has been said that New year's day is the happiest day in prison. One inmate gives his reason why, "because New Year's signals another year gone and one nearer release and the outside world. It doesn't really matter which month you were "sent up", another calendar year has passed. It's gone forever."

Scott A. McConnell, an American Journalist writes the meaning of most holidays is clear: Valentine's Day celebrates romance; July Fourth, independence; Thanksgiving, productivity; Christmas, good will toward men. The meaning of New Year's Day--the world's most celebrated holiday--is not so clear. On this day, many people remember last year's achievements and failures and look forward to the promise of a new year, of a new beginning. But this celebration and reflection is the result of more than an accident of the calendar. New Year's has a deeper significance. What is it?

On New Year's Day, when the singing, fireworks and champagne toasts are over, many of us become more serious about life. We take stock and plan new courses of action to better our lives. This is best seen in one of the most popular customs and the key to the meaning of New Year's: making resolutions.

On average each American makes 1.8 New Year's resolutions. When the rest of the world is taken into account, the number of people making resolutions skyrockets to hundreds of millions. From New York to Paris to Sydney, interesting similarities arise as shown in two very common resolutions: people wanting to be more attractive by losing weight, and to be healthier by exercising more and smoking less. They want to do things better, become better people.

New Year's Day is the most active-minded holiday, because it is the one where people evaluate their lives and plan and resolve to take action. One dramatic example of taking resolutions seriously is the old European custom of: "What one does on this day one will do for the rest of the year." What unites this custom and the more common type of resolutions is that on the first day of the year people take their values more seriously.

Values are not only physical and external. They also can be psychological. Many New Year's resolutions reveal that people want to better themselves by improving psychologically. For example, look at your own resolutions over the years. Haven't they included such vows as: be more patient with your children, improve your self-esteem, and be more emotionally open with your wife? Such resolutions express the moral ambitiousness of a person wanting to improve his self and life.

What then is the philosophic meaning of New Year's resolutions? Every resolution you make on this day implies that you are in control of your self, that you are not a victim fated by circumstance, controlled by stars, owned by luck, but that you are an individual who can make choices to change your life. You can learn statistics, ask for that promotion, fight your shyness, and search for that marriage partner. Your life is in your own hands.



For last year's words belong to last year's language and next year's words await another voice."

-Little Gidding II



If I Could Build Myself

Then
If I could build that
self over
I'd mold a mouth that said
NO, loud and clear
eyes that could see
through lies
ears that heard all the
warnings never told to me
hands that had not
betrayed me
I'd construct legs that ran
from danger
a body that protected itself
and a mind that knew who
it could trust

Now
If I could build myself over
again
I'd design a tongue that
does not pierce but
speaks gently
eyes that see confidence
past the gray clouds of fear
and doubt
ears that obey my heart's
hungry honesty and hopes
hands that are creative,
quick and careful
legs that dance well
enough to follow my
fantasies
I'd assemble a body that's
strong enough to get up
when I fall
A mind that could
remember or forget
a mind that could decide
and a heart that could
heal itself.

-Lovella Rose

Lovella is a poet,
photographer, artist, and
activist who says that she
"strives to be a creator in a
society that often tries to
box us all in."

Ringing in the New Year

cont.

But what is the purpose of making such goals and resolutions? Why bother? Making New Year's resolutions (and doing so even after failing last year's) stresses that people want to be happy. On New Year's Day many people accept, often more implicitly than explicitly, that happiness comes from the achievement of values. That is why you resolve to be healthier, more ambitious, and more confident. You want to enjoy that sense of purpose, accomplishment and pleasure that one feels when achieving values. It is happiness that is the motor and purpose of one's life. It is New Year's, more than any other day that makes the attainment of happiness more real and possible. This is the meaning of New Year's Day and why it is so psychologically important and significant to people throughout the world.

New Years Trivia

- Q: Who established January 1 as the start of a New Year?

A: Julius Caesar, who did so when he created the Julian calendar
- Q: What does the traditional New Year's song, *Auld Lang Syne*, mean?

A: *Auld Lang Syne*, written by Robert Burns in the 1700s, is Scottish for "old long ago."
- Q: Who established the tradition of setting New Year's resolutions?

A: The Babylonians, whose most common resolution was to return borrowed farm equipment.
- Q: What is the most popular New Year's resolution in the United States today?

A: To lose weight
- Q: Which city hosts the first major New Year's Eve celebration each year?

A: Sydney, Australia
- Q: What year did the first New Year's Eve ball drop in Times Square?

A: 1907
- Q: Since its inaugural descent in 1907, the New Year's Eve Ball has dropped every year except two. Which two years did the ball not drop?

A: 1942 and 1943, due to wartime restrictions in New York City



STATE OF NEVADA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS
EDUCATION SERVICES

MISSION

NDOC Education Services provides incarcerated individuals an opportunity for self improvement through the acquisition of knowledge and employable skills.

VISION

Maximize educational opportunities for every incarcerated individual.

GOALS

- *Decrease the amount of disruptive behavior in our corrective institutions*
- *Increase employability, success and productivity for those incarcerated*
- *Reduce the rates of recidivism*

WISHES ALL A HAPPY, SAFE
AND HEALTHY NEW YEAR

In our next issue: Is there a correlation between literacy and crime?